The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Be sure your feet are in the right place, then stand firm.—Lincoln.

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RAIL MEDIATION BILL APPROVED BY SENATE

Washington, May 15.—By a non-partisan vote of 69 to 13 the senate passed the railroad labor bill, providing for the settlement of disputes between carriers and employes and abolishing the railroad labor board.

The house passed the bill several weeks ago. Then the bill was referred to as an "administration" measure. Opposition developed from farmers' organizations and powerful business interests. Before the senate voted on the bill word from the White House indicated that the administration did not care to be identified with it.

Senator Curtis, the majority leader, proposed an amendment which would empower the Interstate Commerce Commission to suspend any agreement between the carriers and employes the commission believed likely to involve wage increases that were detrimental to the public interest. This was supported by the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Farm Bureau Federation, but it was rejected by a vote of 64 to 12. The effect of this provision would be to make the commission dictator of wages.

The fight against the bill was led by James E. Emory, counsel for the National Association of Manufacturers.

POST OFFICE WORKERS BLOCKED BY REACTION

Washington, May 15.—With postal labor costs lower than at any time in the department's history, the postal administration resists every attempt of these employes to improve conditions, says the Union Postal Clerk. This publication is the official magazine of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks.

While favoring sensible economies and the curtailment of unnecessary expenditures, Editor Flaherty says "the word 'economy' is becoming shop worn."

It is serving as an excuse for backward-looking administrators to deny rights and just concessions to the postal workers, says the editor, who declares that "the pendulum of reaction has swung far downward" and that "it is plainly apparent that employes can not expect sympathetic or helpful consideration from the present postal administration in any attempt to improve work standards.

"In his annual report to congress last December, the postmaster general strongly favored recognizing the hardships of night work by the establishment of a pay differential. Two months later, on February 10, the postmaster general blandly advised congress that he was against his own proposition because it was in conflict with the financial policy of the president.

"In sharp contrast to the department's position on remedial measures sponsored by the bona fide labor organizations is its attempt to foist a far-fetched group insurance project upon employes. Congress was told that this proposal was suggested by representatives of the employes. The testimony developed, however, that the idea originated in the postal bureaucracy and was approved only by representatives of a few small groups of employes who are enjoying special privileges from the administration in general. When congress ascertained there was no real sentiment for the group insurance proposal and that bona fide organizations it was promptly discarded."

PROFIT TO "INSIDERS" FROM BANKRUPT ROAD

New York, May 15.—Interstate Commerce Commission hearings on the bankrupt Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad reveal how bankers profit by these railroad reorganizations.

It was shown that one firm put up $25,000,000 for seven days to convert French bonds to a dollar basis and made a profit of $1,813,000 out of the transaction.

A syndicate of 85 members was formed to dispose of $14,000,000 worth of bonds that were bought at 93¾. These bonds were eventually sold to the public at 96¾, or a profit of $30 per $1,000.

Engineers who were commissioned to study the condition of the road before it went into bankruptcy "tipped" one banking firm that the report would be unfavorable. Prior to this, representatives of the bank were assured by the president of the road that an unfavorable report would mean a receivership.

WILL HONOR JOHN I. NOLAN

Cincinnati, May 15.—The John I. Nolan Memorial Joint Committee is receiving contributions for a memorial to the memory of the late John I. Nolan, labor member of congress from California and chief counsel of the International Molders' union.

The chairman of the committee is M. J. Keough, president of the International Molders' union, and the secretary is John P. Frey, editor of International Molders' Journal.

John I. Nolan served in four sessions of congress and was chairman of the house labor committee.

WORKERS LOCKED OUT

Charleston, W. Va., May 15.—Building contractors are attempting to establish the anti-union chop and have locked out their organized employes.

FACTS, NOT EMOTION, SHOULD RULE

Trade unionists face realities, and they should insist that other citizens do likewise.

The unionists' most dangerous foe is he who professes friendship for their cause, but who defends the so-called "open" shop.

Nothing could be more contradictory.

The base of trade unionism is collective bargaining.

The base of the so-called "open" shop is: Every man for himself.

This system is anti-union, through and through. It denies joint action by workers. It permits the employer to "play" one worker against the other.

This system is so vicious its friends can not defend it. They rely on a confused public opinion and appeals to "freedom" and "liberty" to conceal their serfdom.

Anti-unionists should be held down to facts. They should not be permitted to hide their industrial autocracy by emotional appeals.

Let organized workers and sympathizers apply this test to the so-called "open" shop, the "American plan" and other catchy terms: "Do they permit workers to bargain collectively and to select their own representatives?"

Unions Make Wage System Work; Plan Fails For Non-Union Labor

The wage system works when the workers are strong enough to make it work. When they are weak, that is, unorganized, the system still continues to work, but only one way.—Providence (R. I.) Visitor.

Providence, R. I., May 15.—The British general strike is "an economic parting of the ways," says the Providence Visitor, official newspaper of the Catholic diocese of Providence. The wage system works only when the workers are strong enough to make it work, says this church paper.

"The host of people walking the streets are really in revolt against a system. They do not understand this economic system that is called capitalism—few do—but they feel it.

"It is vicious nonsense to lay the strike to a few dollars, more or less, to the miners, and to present that picture as the whole truth.. Economists of a sort talk heavily and comfortably of the prosperity of the coal industry,' and promise some sort of an economic Utopia if this is done. They miss the point. They blink the reality in assuming that coal can be lifted neatly and cleanly out of the whole economic structure and reshaped at will.

"This is not to say that the mines do not present a special, and even particular, problem. There is a difference between the coal industry and others, such as the textile and the farming industries. The mines are not property as easily controlled privately as are the mills. You can't build mines. Either they exist or they do not exist. If they do exist it is a matter of general public interest.

"Yet the fundamental wrongness about mine management is the wrongness that extends through the whole structure of capitalism. The earnings are improperly regulated and unjustly divided. The profits are distributed through a 'wage system' that works when the workers are strong enough to make it work. When they are weak, that is, unorganized, the system still continues to work, but only one way.

"In the case of the English, and, in less serious way, the American mines, the system has broken down. And not as spectacularly, but just as really, the system has broken down in other industries. Even here in the United States, where the workman is the best paid in the world, thousands upon thousands who do not receive a living wage. In England there are many who do not receive any wages at all."

HAITIAN REPUBLIC IS DIRECTED BY U. S.

Chicago, May 15.—"The United States is the real government of Haiti; Americans control the finances. They can have the Haitian congress called when they see fit to do so," said Dr. Paul H. Douglas of the University of Chicago, in an address to trade unionists at the Federation of Labor headquarters.

Dr. Douglas has just returned from Haiti, where he investigated this tiny republic whose history has been marked by many upheavals.

The United States has controlled the island since 1915, said Dr. Douglas.

"The United States has done nothing in Haiti to further education. It has made no determined effort to stamp out illiteracy. Although public primary education is free, very little has been done to encourage attendance. There is but one normal school, a school of law and one where medicine is taught.

"Courts have hardly any power in Haiti. They can issue orders but few of them are put into effect. There is no habeas corpus. One of the libelers of the head of the Haitian state was put in prison. No trial followed. The main object was to get him into jail."

Despite harrowing conditions, Dr. Douglas expressed the hope that a better day would dawn for Haiti.

"Haiti has made serious blunders," he said, "but every nation has the right to make mistakes. With the proper education Haiti will be able to find itself and eventually be ripe for self-government."

IMPEACHMENT TRIAL POSTPONED BY SENATE

Washington, May 15.—The senate has postponed the impeachment trial of Federal Judge English until November 16. This means that congress will probably adjourn some time in June.

As one-third of the senate membership is up for re-election, these lawmakers are not inclined to pass judgment on an impeachment during the summer months.

AUTO MECHANICS UNITING

Oakland, Cal., May 15.—Auto mechanics in this section are organizing. The National Automobile Chamber of Commerce has called on service stations to favor the anti-union shop, and the unionists counter by urging the establishment of co-operative garages wherever these mechanics are locked out. The International Association of Machinists is directing the organizing movement.

JUDGES NOT SUPERMEN; JUST ORDINARY FOLK

Washington, May 15.—Are our judges all pure-minded, disinterested men who should be above criticism?

Senator King of Utah evidently does not believe so, according to this statement in discussing a salary increase for the federal judiciary:

"We recently passed a law giving increase to federal judges. The scramble for these positions was not creditable to the bar, and the political influences employed to fill some of the positions call for severe condemnation. Political factions and political up-appointments for months, and in some instances for more than a year.

"Lawyers of eminence and of the highest ability were, in many instances, passed by because they did not secure the indorsement of politicians and the support of certain political factions or organizations."

PUBLICITY SEEKERS WRECK WOMEN'S PLAN

Washington, May 15.—Publicity seekers have made it impossible for the advisory committee of the United States Women's Bureau to function and Mrs. Sara A. Conboy, secretary-treasurer of the United Textile Workers, has withdrawn. Mrs. Conboy was appointed on the committee by President Green, who has approved her resignation.

The purpose of the committee is to adopt plans for a scientific investigation of women's labor laws.

The committee includes representatives of the National Woman's party who are urging an "equal rights" amendment to the Federal Constitution. The effect of this amendment would be to annul all legislation for women wage earners.

For three months the committee has been deadlocked over methods of procedure. The Labor Woman's party wants public hearings, while Mrs. Conboy insists that this method would only result in giving the organization's party and voluntarily open their books and payroll records. It is too much, also, to expect working women and girls will testify in favor of legislation their employers oppose, for they would do so at the risk of their jobs."

NEW HOUSING BILL SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

New York, May 15.—Governor Smith has signed the Nicoll housing bill.

"I hope," the governor said, "it will prove the beginning of a lasting movement to wipe from our state those blots upon civilization, the unsanitary, unsafe tenement houses that long since became unfit for human habitation."

The new law authorizes the formation of public and private limited dividend corporations, whose function will be to raise the capital and construct low cost housing, the rental of which will be strictly limited by the State Housing Board. Public corporations may also, with the approval of the board, condemn land needed for large scale operations.

DEALERS HIDE BOOKS

Washington, May 15.—During the recent anthracite strike a senate committee started to probe local coal dealers, who were charged with profiteering.

The committee has made little headway, and the dealers refuse to have their books examined. Several made no reply to the senate's request.

REJECT PENNY OFFER

Chicago, May 15.—Organized machinists have rejected a wage increase of 2 cents an hour. They are asking for five times that amount.

Ship Owners Want Chinese Seamen; Would Destroy American Sea Power

Washington, May 15.—The House Immigration Committee has made a favorable report on a bill which would permit the employment of Asiatics on American vessels in the coastwise trade. It would also remove protection to the American public and seamen from alien seamen afflicted with loathsome and contagious diseases.

The bill is the last word of ship owners who, in their frenzy for the cheapest labor in the world, would Chinafy the training ground for American seamen and destroy every prospect for sea power and a merchant marine.

The health provision of the present law provides that when a seaman arrives from a foreign port with a loathsome or contagious disease he shall be placed in a hospital at the expense of the vessel and no part of his wages can be deducted for this cost. The ship owners have fought this law, without success, up to the United States Supreme Court. Now they propose that the act be repealed, and to this the house committee agrees.

The bill would also tear wide gaps in the immigration law by legaling the practice of foreign vessels that come overmanned to American ports and leave unredemanned. Only recently the ship owners acknowledged before a house committee that their bootlegging system has landed thousands of aliens illegally in this country and that they are subject to deportation at the ship owners' expense. The owners want congress to declare an amnesty on these aliens and thereby relieve them of deportation costs, but they refuse to cease the illegal practice.

The bill just reported also provides that if a seaman has been deported and later arrives in an American port in any vessel he shall be denied all landing privileges allowed by law to seamen.

This cleverly-worded clause would make it possible for owners of foreign vessels to employ seamen whom they know can not be admitted to the United States, and who can be held as prisoners on board the vessel while in American ports.

Andrew Furuseth, president of the International Seamen's union, points out that this clause would in no way deter bringing in such men in the crew, but would, on the contrary, act as a premium for vessels to employ these aliens, who could be held to their task on the approval of the United States government.

LIVES LOST; WEALTH WASTED BY PREVENTABLE ACCIDENTS

Washington, May 15.—Strike losses, which are given wide publicity when workers attempt to improve living standards, are insignificant when compared with the loss of man power and wealth because of preventable accidents.

In a call for an industrial accident prevention conference, to be held in this city, July 14-16, Secretary of Labor Davis says:

"There is no adequate appreciation, reported in the United States, but a conservative estimate indicates that the fatal industrial accidents probably exceed 23,000 per year and that non-fatal injuries total 2,500,000 per year.

"The number of days' labor lost is estimated to be 227,169,970 per annum, and the wage loss exceeds a billion dollars. I am advised by experts that fully 85 per cent of these accidents are preventable."

DAUGHERTY INDICTED ON CONSPIRACY CHARGE

New York, May 15.—Harry M. Daugherty, attorney general under the Harding administration and part of the present administration, has been indicted by a federal grand jury on a charge of conspiracy to defraud the government.

He is accused of dividing a $391,000 fee with Jesse Smith, his "confidential agent and representative," in connection with alien-owned property the government seized during the war. It is stated that thousands of dollars' worth of Liberty bonds, which formed part of the settlement, have been traced to Daugherty's bank account. Smith committed suicide in Washington.

Daugherty was attorney general during the shop men's strike and on behalf of the government secured a sweeping injunction from Federal Judge Wilkerson. Another champion of "law and order" during that strike, Federal Judge English of the Eastern Illinois district, must face an impeachment trial before the senate next November. It is claimed that he, also, was reckless with other people's money.

MILL MEN RAISE WAGES

Chicago, May 15.—A threatened strike of 5,000 organized carpenters employed in sash and door mills resulted in a union-shop contract and a minimum rate of $1.20 an hour. If a worker reports for duty and is not employed he is paid half a day's wage.

WIRE MEN RAISE WAGES

Detroit, Mich., May 15.—Electrical Workers' union No. 58 has secured a new wage agreement. Rates will be $1.40 an hour until July 1, and $1.50 thereafter.

Negroes Filched By Pullman Company; Vast Profits Traced To Pauper Wages

Washington, May 15.—Inordinate profits of the Pullman company "are ample and sufficient to better working conditions and hours of employment of Pullman porters and maids," is one reason why congress should investigate this corporation, according to a resolution introduced by Congressman Celler.

The porters organized when they awakened to the trickery of the Pullman company "union," and President Green of the A. F. of L. has assured these exploited workers that he will help them to improve conditions.

Mr. Celler's resolution declares that conditions of labor that the company imposes on their porters and maids "are so below the American standard of living as to shock the public conscience."

Since 1867 the company has "ploughed back" more than $40,000,000 into its capitalization. During that time the company paid its stockholders over $269,000,000 in cash dividends and $64,000,000 in stock dividends. Its net profits last year were $15,771,976.

"Every reasonable effort made by the Pullman porters and maids to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining," the resolution states, "has met with constant and stubborn resistance of the Pullman company, who have used every known method that wealth can purchase to prevent said organization."

The present wage for porters is $67.50 a month. It is graduated upward over a period of 20 to 30 years to $90.

There is no pay for preparatory time, and the company gains several hours' labor from each porter on every trip. If a Pullman porter is scheduled to leave New York for Washington at 12:30 midnight, he reports at 7:30 p. m. These five hours preparing the car is not included in his pay.

Porters are never assured sleep as they are always subject to the call of passengers. If sleep is taken they must steal naps in the smoking room after every passenger has retired.

When extra porters report for duty they are not paid unless employed. The "doubling" system is one of the most vicious of the Pullman working conditions.

"Doubling" means leaving for another point immediately after the porter's arrival off a run, however long. If a porter misses his line because of "doubling," he is not paid during the time he must wait to catch his regular run.

The porter is required to buy polish and equipment for shining shoes. If he does not shine the shoes he is laid off for 15 or 30 days and if he shines them and requests pay he is penalized.

These workers rightfully object to unfair working conditions that are unknown to travelers in Pullman cars, and which have been a factor in the large profits of this corporation.

NORTH POLE REACHED BY DARING AVIATOR

Washington, May 15.—The men who say a thing can't be done are again confounded—an airplane flew over the North Pole.

In 1910 Capt. Robert Peary of the United States navy reached the North Pole with a party of five after a year's arduous toil. Now this objective of every navigator and scientist has been reached by Lieutenant Commander Byrd of the United States navy. He made the round trip from his base at King's Bay, Spitzbergen, in 15 hours and 30 minutes. Capt. Peary traveled the same distance with dog sleds after a year's hard and dangerous toil over treacherous ice.

Last year Roald Amundsen was almost in sight of the goal but contrary winds depleted his gasoline supply and he was forced to retreat.

Many lives and countless treasure has been lost during the last century by navigators and scientists in various nations to reach the top of the world.

COMPENSATION AWARD

San Francisco, May 15.—The State Industrial Accident Board has ruled that illness caused by eating contaminated food while on a business trip is a proper basis for compensation.

The court reversed a contrary decision by the State Industrial Accident Commission.

HOD CARRIERS RAISE WAGES

White Plains, N. Y., May 15.—Hod carriers in this county have raised wages from $8 to $9 a day.

BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE ENDS; WAGE REDUCTION IS BLOCKED

London, England, May 12.—Great Britain's nine-day general strike has been declared off by the Trades Union Congress.

The government has promised that the coal owners' lockout notices will be withdrawn. The miners will resume work at their old wage pending negotiations for final settlement. It is reported that the subsidy will be re-established.

The strike was caused by the coal owners' lockout and wage cut after the government's subsidy, started last year to maintain wages, had ended. The coal owners demanded lower wages and longer hours. This, together with a previous announcement by government officials that wages in general must be lowered, precipitated Great Britain's first general strike.

The unionists rejected financial assistance from Soviet Russia.

The government had declared that no peace negotiations would be considered until the strike was called off. While government officials and trade union officials were in conference, the former announced that "negotiations were not considered re-opened" until the strike leaders announced to Premier Baldwin that the strike order was being cancelled.

This technicality permitted the government to say its ultimatum was observed.

Labor's Noted Free Speech Contest Recalled By Judge Parker's Death

Washington, May 15.—The sudden death of Judge Alton B. Parker in New York city recalls that jurist's long fight for free speech as counsel for the American Federation of Labor in the famous Bucks Stove and Range case.

The company had a dispute with its metal polishers, who were assisted by the A. F. of L. In December, 1907, Justice Gould of the District of Columbia Supreme Court enjoined the A. F. of L., its officers, and all other persons from making any mention of the labor controversy. Officers of the A. F. of L. refused to obey this free speech gag. President Gompers, Vice President Mitchell and Secretary Frank Morrison were cited for contempt of court, and in December, 1908, they were sentenced by Justice Wright to one year, nine months and six months in jail, respectively.

On July 29, 1910, the metal polishers and the Bucks Stove and Range company adjusted their dispute, but the contempt proceedings were continued. Judge Parker, together with Jackson H. Ralston and Frederick L. Siddons represented the A. F. of L. and carried the Wright sentence to the Supreme Court of the United States three times. On March 12, 1914, the court dismissed the case on the ground that further proceedings were barred by the statute of limitation.

The long court contest made it possible for the A. F. of L. to maintain a nationwide agitation against the labor injunction.

Many of the leading figures in this contest have passed to the great beyond. These include President Van Cleave of the stove company, who was also president of the National Association of Manufacturers; Judge Parker, Samuel Gompers, John Mitchell and Justice Gould, who issued the injunction.

In May, 1914, the committee of the judiciary of the House of Representatives began an investigation as to whether Justice Wright had corruptly accepted favors from lawyers appearing before him; whether he had collected and wrongfully appropriated other people's money and whether he was guilty of other official misconduct. Before the committee made its report Justice Wright handed his resignation to President Wilson. The following year the president appointed Mr. Siddons to the vacant judgeship.

Mr. Ralston, the third attorney for the trade unionists, has retired from the presidency of the A. F. of L. in California where he is studying international law to develop his theory that voluntary arbitration is the most practical method to adjust disputes between nations.

RADIO CONTROL BILL NOW BEFORE SENATE

Washington, May 15.—A senate committee's favorable report of the Dill radio control bill has complicated this question.

The committee has passed the White bill, which places radio control in charge of the Secretary of Commerce. A minority in the house, led by Congressman Davis of Tennessee, fought the White bill, and Mr. Davis left a sick bed to combat what he declared was a monopolization of the air by a few powerful interests.

Senator Dill's bill would create an independent commission, appointed by the president, but subject to congressional control.

Advocates of this bill insist that it is unwise to put such power in the hands of one man, regardless of his honesty or wisdom.

The proposal to create a commission that is not responsible to the chief executive is distasteful to the White House. The president has let it be known that in as much as congress empowers him to select members of these commissions, they should be answerable to him. Opponents reply that the executive departments and they point to charges that members of the Federal Tariff Commission and of the United States Shipping Board have been asked to resign because their policies were not in accord with the White House. Under this system, it is claimed, members of these boards can not exercise their judgment.

ANNUAL DEFENSE TEST ABANDONED BY ARMY

Washington, May 15.—The war department has failed to popularize the annual defense test, and the plan has been abandoned. The department may recommend to congress that either a quadrennial national test be legalized or a seasonal muster held by corps areas.

It was originally intended to have an annual national muster day, when every citizen would be enrolled, and patriotic services held. Opposition to the plan developed. The first defense test was held 5 years ago. The following year President Coolidge declined to approve the war department's proposal that the muster be held on Armistice Day. He suggested July 4, but several governors refused to interfere with holiday plans of citizens.

ORGANIZING MEXICANS

Miami, Ariz., May 15.—Mexican workers in the copper section of this state are being organized by the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' union. The Mexicans are displacing Americans with a dual standard of wages on all outside work, while in camps that are Mexican-owned these workers are paid about 60 per cent of the wages in other camps. The Mexicans do not approve this system, and are aiding in the unionization campaign.

EXPLOITERS IGNORE PORTO RICAN MISERY

Washington, May 15.—With a sweep of his hand before a senate committee that is holding hearings on Porto Rico, Miguel Guerra ignored charges that Porto Rican laborers are hungry and can not secure work. These statements were made by Santiago Iglesias, secretary of the Pan-American Federation of Labor and a member of the Porto Rican legislature.

To support his statements, Mr. Iglesias submitted reports by the United States Health Service, the United States Children's Bureau, the Bureau of Insular Affairs and the Department of Commerce.

Faced by these documents, Mr. Guerra replied: "Iglesias wants to make every Porto Rican a millionaire over night."

Mr. Guerra is associated with sugar interests that have seized large tracts of land in defiance of law and whose system of absentee landlordism has wrought general unemployment and poverty.

President Green of the A. F. of L. has urged the creation of a congressional commission to investigate Porto Rico, but this is not favored by Mr. Guerra and associates.

RADIO USE STUDIED

Washington, May 15.—The use of the radio by the president during the general strike has renewed interest in the latest form of communication.

Under legislation now in force in the United States the government is authorized to take over broadcasting transmitters. All radio control bills introduced in congress assign this privilege to the president.

The war and navy departments have worked out plans to call out the United States reserves by radio in the event of war.

STATE PRISONS FILLED

Ossining, N. Y., May 15.—For the first time in 14 years the prisons of this state are filled to capacity, according to James L. Long, superintendent of state prisons. When Mr. Long took office, seven years ago, there were 5,500 inmates in the six institutions under his department. Now there are 7,200.

METAL MEN WIN STRIKE

Des Moines, Iowa, May 15.—Sheet metal workers have won their five-weeks' strike for higher wages. Rates of $1.15 an hour will continue until October 1 and will increase until April 1, next year, when they will be $1.25.